

COOK COUNTY HEALTH & HOSPITALS SYSTEM

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The Cook County Health and Hospitals System (CCHHS) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed 1115 waiver application to transform the Illinois Medicaid system to improve health outcomes, streamline and upgrade Illinois' health care delivery system, and reduce costs.

As the nation's third largest public hospital system, CCHHS offers our system as a partner and innovations test site for the strategies and initiatives outlined in the concept paper.

Over the past year, the federal 1115 demonstration waiver establishing the CountyCare program has allowed CCHHS to create a path to coverage and care for low-income, uninsured adults in Cook County. CountyCare helps its members move away from the episodic care that is typical for uninsured patients and into a care coordination model that emphasizes primary and preventive care through a patient-centered medical home. Further, CCHHS has begun to achieve administrative efficiencies through a "4 P" approach, as the provider, payer, plan, and population health manager for Cook County residents.

CCHHS and our partners have initiated over 122,000 applications for CountyCare. Of the applications submitted, over 57,000 people have been found eligible for coverage, with another 27,000 applications still pending. In the next year, CountyCare will operate as a Medicaid managed care network and also offer a similar plan on the Health Insurance Marketplace to ensure continuity of care for those earning too much to qualify for Medicaid.

Pathway 1: Home and Community Based Infrastructure, Coordination, and Choice

CountyCare provides new opportunities for the expansion and integration of behavioral health services, as well for using Medicaid dollars to address social determinants of health. A Health Needs Assessment of CountyCare applicants indicates that one in five have concerns about where they will stay “tonight or in the near future”. These survey data indicate the tremendous need to consider additional resources that cannot be provided solely by a health care provider.

These issues are of particular importance for the justice-involved population. Over 7,500 CountyCare applications have been initiated at the Cook County Jail, with an application approval rate of 92%. In addition to mental and physical health needs, many of these individuals also require assistance with housing and employment to help stabilize their situation and keep them healthy and out of the justice system.

Pathway 2: Delivery System Transformation

CountyCare has already demonstrated early successes in the creation of a countywide network that includes 138 primary care access points, 34 hospitals, including 5 academic medical centers, as well as neighborhood pharmacies. We have partnered with the Medical Home Network, which is providing data analytics for CountyCare members to help us understand patient utilization patterns so that we can provide services that most appropriately meet patients’ health care needs.

CCHHS seeks to use its unique positioning as the “4 P’s” (payer, plan, provider, and population/public health administrator) to demonstrate administrative efficiencies that will improve health outcomes, provide quality services, and reduce costs. The opportunity to access Delivery System Reform Incentive Program funding is critical to provide the necessary resources to transform our care delivery systems.

Pathway 3: Build Capacity of the Health Care System for Population Health Management

CCHHS is engaged in population health management and implementation of wellness strategies through the Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH). In 2010, CCDPH and its partner The

Public Health Institute of Metropolitan Chicago, were awarded \$16 million for a two-year Communities Putting Prevention to Work grant to promote policy and environmental changes in schools, workplaces, and community settings to help residents make healthy choices and live active lives. CCHHS seeks to use best practices from this grant and expand the work to additional communities focusing on food security and chronic disease management.

Pathway 4: 21st Century Health Care Workforce

CCHHS strongly supports the establishment of a Medicaid Graduate Medical Education program, an expansion of loan repayment programs for a broad range of health professionals, and the training and preparation of health care providers at all levels, including a career pipeline for veterans and the training of practitioners in correctional health services.

In Cook County alone, over a quarter million adults are estimated to be newly eligible for Medicaid. Our experience with the CountyCare program indicates that many of these adults have significant health care needs and could benefit from new ways to deliver and manage their health, including through case management, home visiting, and the use of community health workers.

Again, CCHHS welcomes the opportunity to work with the State in their pursuit of an 1115 global waiver. If you would like to follow up with us, please feel free to contact Kathy Chan, Director of Policy at kchan5@cookcountyhhs.org.